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**NEWS**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, May 26,

**ENSURING OUR FREEDOM, EVERYDAY**

*An Opinion Piece by U.S. Senator George Voinovich*

Memorial Day is an opportunity for our nation to salute the men and women of our Armed Forces who have helped secure for us the freedoms we enjoy. I think this year's Memorial Day will be remembered as a special one for many reasons—both personal and public.

This year the sacrifices of our nation's heroes are receiving special attention in our nation's capital with the official dedication of the National World War II Memorial on May 29. It's the first national memorial dedicated to all the military veterans of the Second World War, the citizens on the home front, the nation's efforts at large, and the high moral purpose that motivated the nation's call to arms. Located on the National Mall, the memorial is a majestic and powerful tribute to the sacrifices made by the World War II generation, including the more than 400,000 Americans who died fighting for our nation. It should definitely be on the list of places to visit for any trip to Washington.

This month some Ohio high school students saw their own efforts to recognize our veterans reach completion with a ceremony for a new memorial at Arlington National Cemetery. Known as the Pyramid of Remembrance and given a prominent location in the cemetery, this memorial honors the men and women of our Armed Forces who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving our country in non-combat and peacekeeping missions. It was built thanks to the efforts of students from Riverside High School in Painesville, who conceived the idea and worked hard to see it through to completion. I joined many of these students for the dedication ceremony and I'm proud of them, and

their teachers, for following their vision to make sure that these heroes will not be forgotten.

On Tuesday I was glad to be able to honor a soldier who served heroically in World War II when I presented Edward Gebura of Lyndhurst with eight medals for his service, including the prestigious Bronze Star, which he won during the campaigns to liberate Sicily and Italy from fascism. Mr. Gebura never received the medals, however. After contacting the Pentagon on his behalf, Sen. Mike DeWine and I were able to work through our joint constituent casework office to obtain them for him. It was a great honor for me to present these medals to Mr. Gebura, and I'm grateful for the service he—and so many others from his generation—gave to us.

We enjoy freedom today because of the struggles of so many who came before us. And future generations will enjoy freedom tomorrow because of the struggle and sacrifice our troops still make today. This year's Memorial Day is especially poignant given our current role in the War on Terrorism. Thousands of American service members are deployed around the world defending our freedom by stamping out terrorism and bringing freedom to people who have hungered for it for decades. This is a difficult struggle but one worth enduring to protect ourselves and the ideals we know to be so important: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Join me this Memorial Day in saying a special prayer for the safety of our men and women in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the world, and for comfort for their families.

This Memorial Day we remember those who have fallen in the past and also those who have fallen in just the past few months. Thomas Jefferson said the price of democracy is eternal vigilance. One way that our nation has manifested that vigilance is by fighting tyranny and oppression around the world. The service and sacrifice of those who do the fighting makes our nation—and the world—a safer, better place to live for our children and grandchildren.

God Bless our troops, God Bless Ohio, and God Bless America.

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